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SPORTS

Staying focused and determined, Winchester High girls hockey preps for a long postseason run

JOE MCCONNELL | SPORTS EDITOR

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On Senior Day, Feb. 14, the spotlight was shining on these six Winchester High girls hockey players – (in no particular order) Courtney Fisher, Madelyn Rabinovich, June McCabe, Josie Chang, Chloe Goldberg and Cate Sheehan – as they were honored for their contributions to the program the last four years prior to the team's 3-1 win over Belmont. COURTESY PHOTO/WINCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS HOCKEY

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With just one game left in the regular season against non-league host Andover on Thursday, Feb. 19, at Tewksbury's Breakaway Ice Arena, starting at 2:50 p.m., the Winchester High girls hockey team (13-8) appears to be ready for the postseason.

As of Feb. 17, the Red & Black are seeded 17th in the Division 1 power rankings. There are 52 teams statewide in this division.

Since late January, they have been very consistent in their play, according to Head Coach Tommy Scarpa.

"The losses we have endured have been by one goal, including (the road overtime loss) to Malden Catholic (on Jan. 21)," the coach added.

Chloe Goldberg scored the first goal of that game, but the Lancers came back with two of their own, before the Red & Black tied it up with 26 seconds left on a goal by senior Madelyn Rabinovich. Scarpa pulled Goalie Riley Pimentel, who made 20 saves in the game, for an extra skater prior to that score.

However, the home team ended up winning the game in overtime.

"That was a frustrating loss, because (one of MC's goals) was clearly goaltender interference, yet it wasn't called," said Scarpa.

But Winchester bounced right back to beat host Burlington three days later, 4-1. Junie McCabe, Courtney Fisher and Goldberg scored one goal apiece to go along with freshman Maddy Napolitano's first varsity marker. Maddy's classmate Gracyn Walsh was in net to record her first varsity win after making nine saves.

"(Walsh) should have had a shutout, because Burlington's lone g
hit the crossbar," said Scarpa.

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The Winchester girls then returned home to Woburn's O'Brien Arena to beat non-league Masco, 4-2 on Jan. 28.

"We started the game flat, giving up one goal in both the first and second period," said Scarpa. "We didn't play horribly, but still didn't play our game, either. But then, we decided to play our style of hockey with five minutes left in the game, and as a result we scored four unanswered goals to win it."

Freshman Caroline McGowan led the way with two goals. Cate Sheehan and Goldberg accounted for the other two scores. Walsh was credited with 15 saves to secure another win in her young scholastic career, while keeping her teammates in it until the offense got going.

The Red & Black then closed out the month of January with a 3-1 win over host Arlington on Jan. 31.

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"We outplayed (Arlington) in their own building," said Scarpa. "Our senior captains – Josie Chang, McCabe and Goldberg – accounted for all three goals. Pimentel was back in net to come up with 13 saves to seal the deal on the win.

The Red & Black made it two in a row after a very satisfying 2-0 win against host Lexington on Feb. 7.

"We played well in this game with help from Riley (Pimentel) in net," said Scarpa. "She made several game-changing stops at pivotal times, including one after a Lexington player came out of the penalty box to go on a breakaway, when it was only 1-0."

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Altogether, Pimental made 10 saves in the game to get the shutout. Grace Monahan and McGowan notched the goals.

But then came Woburn, and a 2-1 loss to those pesky Tanners. Winchester had the better team, according to Scarpa. They only gave up two goals on fortunate bounces, while Clare McCabe avoided the shutout with the team's lone goal of the game. Pimentel came up with 12 saves to keep things close.

Their next game was against visiting Reading on Feb. 11.

"It was a carbon copy of the Woburn game," said Scarpa.

It was another heartbreaking 2-1 loss that could have gone either way. Goldberg netted the Winchester goal, while Pimentel ended up with 15 saves at the other end of the ice.

"Our overall play has been outstanding, and I told the girls that I couldn't ask anything more from them," said Scarpa after the Reading game. "We literally outplayed teams this year, and have had tons of chances with very little to show for it. We are a lunchpail blue collar hockey team that depends on everyone doing their job, and that's exactly what's been happening. We just can't find the back of the net that often right now."

But in their next two games, they did something that could change that narrative around, starting with a 3-1 win over visiting Belmont on Valentine's Day, which also coincided with Senior Day, which honored the team's six seniors before the game. They then went on to bury their visitors from Nantucket the very next day to the tune of 11-0.

Following the aforementioned game against Andover on Thursday, all eyes will turn to the postseason. The state tournament hockey pairings will be announced on Sunday, Feb. 22, and here's what Scarpa and his st
telling their players, before the playoffs get underway.

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"We tell them we don't care who we play on game day, we just need to play our brand of hockey, and no one will beat us," Scarpa said. "When we stick to our gameplan, we are the most difficult team to play against, according to the Woburn and Reading coaches. I'm not worried about this group. They're an amazing bunch of young ladies that give us everything they have shift in and shift out.

"Our powerplay could use a booster shot, but on the other hand our penalty kill has to be one of the best in the league," he added. "We have had eight losses, where six were by one goal and one was by two, but that was into an open net. Our 4-0 loss to Reading earlier this season was actually a 2-0 game, before we gave up two empty net goals. We have been in every game, and have outshot our opponents (two for every one game) this season.

"With (one regular season) game still left, we are not trying to get too far ahead of ourselves. We want to stay focused. In our last two seasons, (we) have played our best hockey in the tournament," Scarpa continued. "We will once again be looking for that extra gear, when the puck drops to start this year's postseason. I feel like we have just as good of a chance to win as a number of (playoff) teams, because we have three solid lines that can compete with anyone, and (with that mind) I believe we can make a deep run in the postseason."

Last year, the Red & Black ended up with an 8-9-3 regular season record, and were the 19th seed in Division 1. They went on to shutout St. Mary's of Lynn, 1-0 in the Round of 32, only to lose to Malden Catholic in the Sweet 16, 2-1. If given a favorable bracket to go along with their winning record this year, they can definitely be a threat to play for the state championship at the TD Garden on St. Patrick's Day weekend.

Joe McConnell is a longtime, award-winning sports editor for numero Shore publications. He began covering Winchester sports for the News in

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November 2024 and is currently its Sports Editor. He can be reached at editor@winchesternews.org.

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SPORTS

Winchester boys basketball heads to Bridgewater-Raynham for Sweet 16 game after beating Lexington in postseason opener

It was the third meeting this year between Middlesex League boys basketball rivals Lexington (16-5, 11th seed) and Winchester (17-4, 22nd seed). They split the first two during the regular season, thus making this Round of 32 postseason matchup the impromptu rubber game of this year's series, with the

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SPORTS

Winchester wrestling enjoys Top 10 finish at state divisional meet; senior captains move on to All-States

After the Winchester High qualified wrestlers competed hard over two days last weekend (Feb. 20, 21) in the State Division 1 Meet at North Andover High School, Mother Nature gave them a break to rest and recuperate with Monday's blizzard that resulted in two days off fro

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February 28, 2026

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March 3, 2026

SPORTS

Winchester boys hockey advances to the Sweet 16 after beating Wachusett in the tournament opener

The Winchester High boys hockey team (12-9-2), the 17th seed, edged the 16th-seeded Wachusett Regional Mountaineers (18-2-1), 5-4 in a Round of 32 Division 1 state tournament game at Westborough's Northstar Ice Arena on Feb. 25. The Red & Black will now take on top seed Catholic Memorial (18-2-1)

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February 27, 2026

SPORTS

With postseason starting Friday night, WHS boys hoop seniors English, Sarpong, Burbine join Middlesex League elite

The Winchester High boys basketball team, the 22nd seed, will take on Middlesex League rival Lexington, the 11th seed, to begin the Division 1 state tournament in the Round of 32 on Friday night, Feb. 27, starting at 6 p.m. These teams are so evenly matched, beginning with the

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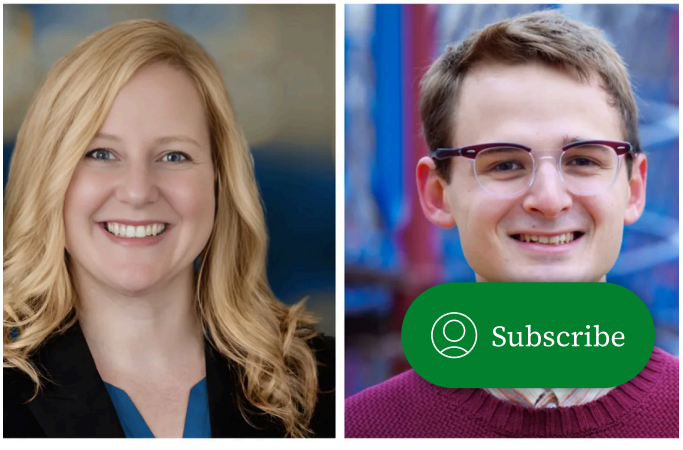

EVENTS

Celebrate Women's History Month with Girls Leading Change

The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: To mark Women's History Month and International Women's Day in 2026, the Network for Social Justice is collaborating with club leaders from Winchester High School and members of the Community Health team from La Colaborativa in Chelsea and

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. This iconic production is set in the 1920s. Performances will take place on March 13 and 14

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

March 4, 2026

EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

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